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# USDA'S REPORT TO CONSUMERS

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE · OFFICE OF INFORMATION · WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250



SEPTEMBER 1970

## NATIONAL INCOME POVERTY GUIDELINES

Announced For School Lunch Program. National income poverty guidelines for determining children's eligibility for free or reduced-price lunches were announced August 4 by Secretary of Agriculture Clifford M. Hardin. These guidelines, the first on a national basis, involve lunches under the National School Lunch Program and in other school lunch programs receiving federally-donated foods. After January 1, 1971, any child from a family with an income at or below the national income poverty guidelines shall be served a lunch either free or at a reduced price - not to exceed 20 cents - in a school that is receiving Federal school lunch cash or commodity assistance. The guidelines may be used voluntarily by schools as their income criteria until January 1 when adoption becomes mandatory. Private schools with programs administered by the Department of Agriculture are exempt from the guidelines under certain conditions. The guidelines are:

| TOTAL FAMILY SIZE                    | 48 STATES, D.C. and<br>OUTLYING AREAS* | HAWAII    | ALASKA    |
|--------------------------------------|--|-----------|-----------|
| One                                  | \$1,920                                | \$2,210   | \$2,400   |
| Two                                  | 2,520                                  | 2,900     | 3,150     |
| Three                                | 3,120                                  | 3,590     | 3,900     |
| Four                                 | 3,720                                  | 4,280     | 4,650     |
| Five                                 | 4,270                                  | 4,910     | 5,340     |
| Six                                  | 4,820                                  | 5,540     | 6,025     |
| Seven                                | 5,320                                  | 6,115     | 6,650     |
| Eight                                | 5,820                                  | 6,690     | 7,275     |
| For each additional<br>family member | Add \$450                              | Add \$520 | Add \$560 |

\*Outlying areas include Guam, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, American Samoa, and the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

## HOW MUCH DO HOMEMAKERS KNOW ABOUT FOOD AND NUTRITION?

USDA Plans to Find Out. What do U.S. homemakers know about nutritive values of foods? What are her ideas on handling foods to preserve its nutritive value, appearance, and flavor? The U.S. Department of Agriculture is seeking the answers to these and other questions in an upcoming nationwide survey on the food and nutrition knowledge of American homemakers. Approximately 2,500 homemakers will be interviewed in the one-year study. Why is this information needed? Improving the nutritional health of individuals often means changing eating habits or patterns. To bring about such changes, it is first necessary to know why homemakers choose the foods they do.



## LAYING DOWN THE LAWN

Plant Now For Spring. What's the best time of year to put in a new lawn? According to a USDA seed expert, autumn is the best time to plant a new lawn. Spring is the best time to revitalize a poor lawn with new grass. In buying seed for your lawn this fall, you will find an array of different kinds, brands, prices, and packages from which to choose. If it all baffles you, be sure to check the labels on the packages for quality information. This information is required for all seed (including most lawn seed) sold interstate under the Federal Seed Act, which is enforced by the USDA's Consumer and Marketing Service. Another source of aid is a USDA publication, "How to Buy Lawn Seed" (H&G-169). Single copies can be obtained free from the Office of Information, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

## SEPTEMBER PLENTIFULS



For Back-to-School Appetites. A hard day at the books calls for some hearty dishes to revive the bodies and souls of the back-to-school crowd. Mothers will find help in meeting the challenge of whopping appetites with nutritious and tasty dishes made from foods listed as September Plentifuls--canned peaches, canned applesauce, peanuts and peanut products, and dry split peas. Plentiful Foods for October will include applesauce, apple juice, pork, broiler-fryers, dry beans, canned peaches, canned salmon, onions, eggs, potatoes, and dried prunes.

## THE THREE "R'S" -- AND A "C"

Conservation Education. It's that time of year when the doors of education open and Junior takes up reading, 'riting, and 'rithmetic once more. But in this age of environmental concern there's another vital subject he should be studying -- conservation education. To help educators and youth leaders locate suitable materials for teaching conservation, USDA's Forest Service has prepared a list of the forest conservation teaching materials it has published. Included are charts, posters, audio-visual materials, and bulletins and pamphlets such as "Teaching Conservation Through Outdoor Education Areas," "Ranger 'Rithmetic," and "Suggested Questions for a High School Conservation Quiz." For a copy of the list write to Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250 and ask for "Materials to Help Teach Forest Conservation, FS-28."

## TRACING AGRICULTURE'S RECORD

In A Changing Environment. Agriculture's record in both exploiting and conserving environmental values is traced in a new slide set and filmstrip, "Agriculture and the Changing Environment." The 78-picture presentation, issued by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, depicts the ways in which conservation and pollution problems have developed -- from the time the early pioneers first opened up the West, through the Dust Bowl days, major floods, and the effects on air, soil, and water of modern agricultural and industrial practices. It also shows how research is solving many of these problems and what still remains to be done to keep America bountiful and beautiful. The slide set and film strip are accompanied by an illustrated narrative guide. Copies of the slide set can be purchased for \$12.50 from the Photography Division, Office of Information, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. Copies of the filmstrip can be purchased for \$8.50 from Photo Lab, Inc., 3825 Georgia Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20011. A taped narration can be purchased with either for \$1.50.



## FOOD PREVIEW FOR FALL

Food prices have increased much less rapidly in recent months. Still, for the whole year prices may average about 5 percent above 1969 largely because of last winter's steep increases. Nationally, we are paying and spending more for food, but are increasing our earnings at an even faster rate. As a result, the food share of our after-tax income for 1970 likely will decline slightly to around 16.5 percent. A decade ago, the comparable rate was 20 percent.

### Outlook For Major Foods This Fall--

You will see more pork this fall--output may run a tenth or more larger than last fall. Beef production is expected to show only moderate gains. The lower prices for pork may put some downward pressure on beef prices. Ample supplies of these meats would tend to limit any significant change in lamb prices and help hold chicken prices at current levels. Poultry meat counters will be well stocked. Thanksgiving turkeys may cost about the same as last year.

Price increases for milk and dairy products may slacken. So far this year they are up nearly 5 percent due to higher wholesale and distribution costs.

Though noncitrus fruit output is down substantially this year, total fruit supplies are expected to be ample. Processors entered the season with big supplies. Prices for many processed items are currently running below last year.

Indicated production of processed vegetables is less than a year ago for most items. Packers contracted for less acreage because of large inventories at the beginning of the season. Prices for most items may show firmness.

Indicated potato acreage for fall harvest is up a bit from 1969's bumper crop. Under pressure of heavier supplies, prices for potatoes dropped seasonally in mid-August when several areas began shipping simultaneously.

### On The Other Grocery Shelves--

Egg prices should hold under levels of a year ago with larger output in prospect in coming months. There may be further price increases for cereals, bakery goods, sugar, and soft drinks. Coffee prices are expected to increase some the rest of the year because of anticipated short supplies of new-crop coffee.

### Food Consumption Trends--

There will be wider use of canned and frozen vegetables in the 70's largely at the expense of fresh vegetables. Since 1965, per person use of processed vegetables has exceeded that of fresh. We like tomatoes more and more, and buy more of them canned than fresh. In the last decade, per person use of processed tomato items combined rose 18 percent. Translated in terms of fresh tomatoes, this means that every U.S. citizen is now eating over 50 pounds of tomatoes annually in some form of processed products. Fast-food businesses featuring catsup-seasoned hamburgers and french fries, and the expanding pizza market--catering largely to the younger population--have helped make tomato products a big volume gainer.

Easy On The Eyes. The study desk gets lots of use this time of year. And concentrating on the homework is much easier if the study area is equipped with good lighting --- properly placed. As any dedicated student can tell you, prolonged work in too little light or in glare can be as tiring as working hard all day. Proper light all through the house not only makes your home comfortable and easy to live in, it can enhance the furnishings and colors as well. Whether you are building a new home or improving your present lighting arrangements, much can be done at surprisingly low cost when you know and apply the principles of good lighting. "Planning Your Home Lighting" (H&G-138), a USDA publication, gives tips and suggestions on these principles and can help you decide where you need light and how much light you need. It also includes information on how to choose and use portable lamps and home lighting fixtures, light sources, and how to maintain lighting equipment. Single copies of this enlightening bulletin may be obtained free from the Office of Information, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

#### LIGHT AND DRY MUSHROOMS

USDA Process Goes Commercial. Air-dried mushroom pieces, prepared by a process developed by USDA's Agricultural Research Service, are now being manufactured commercially. They are making appearances as ingredients in processed foods such as dried soup mixes. The mushroom pieces, dehydrated by the very economical USDA method, retain the distinctive flavor and light color of fresh mushrooms and compare in taste to freeze-dried mushrooms costing about twice as much. If dried to below 7 percent moisture and hermetically sealed, the mushroom pieces will keep for at least 7 months without flavor loss.

#### NUTS YOU MAY NOT HAVE KNOWN

New Twists On The Old "Shelled" Game. It takes only a little imagination to make "company fare" of plain food or to make your favorite foods even more delicious: Add Nuts. Nuts, which can double as a cooking ingredient or as a garnish, snack or appetizer, contribute rich flavor and crunchy texture to many kinds of foods. According to a USDA bulletin, "Nuts in Family Meals: A Guide for Consumers," nuts can be used as an added source of protein and food energy in the diet. The publication tells how to distinguish good quality. In addition, it gives a wide variety of recipes for main dishes, salads, soups, breads, desserts, sauces, and other nutty favorites. Single copies of "Nuts in Family Meals: A Guide for Consumers" (H&G-176) are available free on request from the Office of Information, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

#### FOOD PRICES ON THE GLOBAL SCENE

None of the industrial countries reporting consumer price changes to the United Nations experienced lower food prices in 1969 than in 1968. Close to two-thirds of some 40 developing countries reported increases of 3 to 6 percent. Eight countries had greater increases and seven had smaller ones. The U.S. advance was 5 percent.

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SERVICE is a monthly newsletter of consumer interest. It is designed for those who report to the individual consumer rather than for mass distribution. For information about items in this issue, write: Lillie Vincent, Editor of Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of Information, Washington, D.C. 20250.